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of Ontario



Assemblée
législative
de l'Ontario

**Official Report
of Debates
(Hansard)**

A-30

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

A-30

**Standing Committee on
Government Agencies**

Intended appointments

**Comité permanent des
organismes gouvernementaux**

Nominations prévues

2nd Session
41st Parliament

Tuesday 27 February 2018

2^e session
41^e législature

Mardi 27 février 2018

Chair: Cristina Martins
Clerk: William Short

Présidente : Cristina Martins
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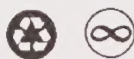
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

STANDING COMMITTEE ON
GOVERNMENT AGENCIESCOMITÉ PERMANENT DES
ORGANISMES GOUVERNEMENTAUX

Tuesday 27 February 2018

Mardi 27 février 2018

The committee met at 0900 in committee room 2.

ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Good morning, everyone, and welcome. It is my duty to entertain a motion for Vice-Chair. Are there any motions this morning? Mr. Qaadri.

Mr. Shafiq Qaadri: I move that Ms. Kiwala be appointed Vice-Chair of the committee.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): A motion has been moved by Mr. Qaadri. Is there any debate? Are the members ready to vote, seeing that there is no debate? All those in favour? The motion is carried.

Congratulations, Ms. Kiwala. You are now Vice-Chair.

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: Thank you.

INTENDED APPOINTMENTS

MR. RAJNEESH SHARDA

Review of intended appointment, selected by official opposition party: Rajneesh Sharda, intended appointee as member, Licence Appeal Tribunal (Safety, Licensing Appeals and Standards Tribunals Ontario).

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): We will now move to the appointments review. We have one intended appointee this morning to hear from. We will consider the concurrence following the interview.

Our first intended appointee today is Mr. Rajneesh Sharda, nominated as member, Licence Appeal Tribunal (Safety, Licensing Appeals and Standards Tribunals Ontario). Please come forward and take your seat at the table. Welcome. Thank you very much for being here this morning. You may begin with a brief statement, if you wish. Members of each party will then have 10 minutes to ask you questions. Any time used for your statement will be deducted from the government's time for questioning. When questioning does begin, it will begin with the official opposition.

Thank you very much, Mr. Sharda. You have 10 minutes.

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: Thank you. Honourable Chair Ms. Martins and committee members, good morning. My name is Rajneesh Sharda. I have applied to be a member of the Licence Appeal Tribunal. I have been a practising lawyer for over 20 years. My legal practice has ranged from the Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee to a small firm and then evolved to a sole practice. Although I

have maintained a general practice, accident benefits did form a significant portion of my practice. I have advocated for my clients before the Financial Services Commission of Ontario in this regard.

I have also appeared before provincial tribunals which include the Ontario Labour Relations Board, the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board, the Consent and Capacity Board of Ontario and the Licence Appeal Tribunal general division. Administrative law has been a core practice area for me. Therefore, I bring a breadth of legal experience to this position and specific legal knowledge regarding accident benefits, which I am confident will assist me in quickly coming up to speed in my adjudicative services to the Licence Appeal Tribunal and the Automobile Accident Benefits Service.

I have been privileged to have served as an adjudicator and senior lawyer member of the Consent and Capacity Board of Ontario. Currently, I serve as an adjudicator with the Law Society Tribunal and as a deputy judge of the Superior Court of Justice in Brampton. These combined past and current experiences give me a strong foundation to ensure that I can exercise my adjudicative role in a fair, balanced and efficient manner for the benefit of Ontarians who come before the Licence Appeal Tribunal.

My adjudicative experiences have also allowed me to fine-tune my ability to listen and understand parties, and then exercise my professional judgment in an informed manner. In my role as a deputy judge, I am often faced with parties who seem so entrenched in their positions that it appears that they will never settle their case. By applying my skills, I have brought even these entrenched parties to a resolution of their dispute.

As a member of the Consent and Capacity Board, at that time, we were required to deliver written reasons within 48 hours of a request being made. This experience enhanced my writing skills and my ability to give written reasons for the panel's decision within a tight timeline.

As a deputy judge, it is also important to make decisions, and I have decided many trials after giving the parties a fair and impartial hearing. I am required when giving a decision to give reasons for my decision based on the facts and relevant laws, which I have done on many occasions, both orally and in writing.

You may note I enjoy and am passionate about public service. I am therefore before you today so that I can expand my opportunity to serve Ontarians.

In conclusion, I would like to express my gratitude to the committee members for their services to Ontarians as members of provincial Parliament. As a former municipal and regional councillor, I have experienced a glimpse of the privilege to engage in such public service. You are to be commended for the countless hours you have spent in your service to Ontarians while being away from your family and loved ones.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Thank you very much, Mr. Sharda. We will now begin questions with Mr. Pettapiece.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Good morning, and thanks for coming in this morning.

I've been going through your resumé that was presented to us; I want to start with that and then I'll ask you some other questions that we have prepared.

I see that you do quite a bit of public service in teaching or working with young folks and that type of thing. One thing that I'm kind of interested in is that you preside as a judge in a mock criminal trial.

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: Yes.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Can you tell me a little bit about that?

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: The Peel judicial education network is part of the Ontario judicial education network. In Peel region, we conduct mock trials which are dedicated to high schools, predominantly grade 11. They are criminal trials. They are preps—the OBA, the Ontario Bar Association, has a provincial tournament. The winner of the Peel region team will then go to the provincials and appear before the Ontario Bar Association mock trials.

It's generally subjects of criminal law. Both schools have to prepare as crown and defence, so depending on which part of the day they're preparing, they will present those sides of the case. All the teams have witnesses that they have within them. They usually have lawyers that assist them from the community, so we have a lot of community buy-in.

I also sit on the committee at the provincial courthouse, the OCJ committee that runs that tournament. I think we're into our 12th year. It's a very nice opportunity to see the minds of the youth, how engaged they are, and how they get to experience our legal system in a different way. It's quite fulfilling for me for that reason.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: The Criminal Code is a big book, so do you run the gamut of all kinds of criminal trials?

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: No. What ends up happening is that OBA usually picks a case. One year, it was a manslaughter case; one year, I think it was a drug case. I just got the package for this year, so I haven't reviewed it yet. They pick a case and then each school has a mentor, a lawyer practising in the community who will go in and assign themselves to the school. They will mentor the teams. The teams will prepare that case in relation to guilty or not guilty—so the crown trying to prove the guilt of the person and the defence trying to say that the crown has not met the burden. It's very focused, so

whatever the charge will be, they will focus on that charge. They will focus on the facts that are presented and they will present the case.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: So you're not retrying existing cases?

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: No, no. I think there might be similarities to cases, but not existing cases.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Okay. That's interesting that you're doing that. And that's with grade 11 students?

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: To my recollection, yes, it's grade 11 and 12.

The schools apply and not all schools get in, because it's a limited number of schools we have to take for the tournament. We usually have a waiting list of schools that want to get involved.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: You're a deputy judge of the Small Claims Court right now.

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: That's correct.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: You'll be taking on another position with this. So you do have the time to do these things?

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: Yes, I do.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Okay. We looked at the Elections Ontario database and it shows that you are a donor to the Liberal Party.

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: Correct.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: I think we have a total of over \$2,000 since 2014 so you are that person that we have here.

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: I didn't total up my amounts, but I have contributed, yes.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: I guess that leads to my next question about patronage appointments. This could come up as being a patronage appointment, since you have donated to this party over the last number of years. Your thoughts?

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: My thoughts on that are that I act as an impartial person. When I was appointed to the Consent and Capacity Board, I was appointed by a minister of the crown from the Progressive Conservative Party. So the politics don't come into my service. My service is the duty that you will assign to me, and my goal is to perform that duty to the best of my abilities.

0910

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: It's just that in 2014 and 2015, over \$2,000 was donated to the Liberal government, and the following year you were appointed as a deputy judge. Some people might see this as being patronage, since you're getting another position.

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: The appointment as a deputy judge is done by the senior regional justice. It's not a political appointment, and it's based on my work in the community and the knowledge by the judges of me. So the recommendation is made by the regional senior justice, and I guess eventually you get through the process and you're appointed by an order in council. I understand that, but I don't see a nexus there. I don't think I've ever donated in that regard. As I said, I've also donated to the Progressive Conservatives.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Okay. It says here that the majority of appeals before the tribunal involve liquor licences, new home warranty claims, medical suspensions of drivers' licences, impoundment of motor vehicles and different things.

I had a chap in my office a couple of years ago. He had had his licence suspended for medical reasons.

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: Right. You mean driver's licence?

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Yes, driver's licence; I'm sorry. He had an awful time getting it back, even though he had doctors' signatures that he was okay. He has diabetes and his licence was taken away because of some issues with that. He had an awful time getting it back. I guess where I'm going is, will your decisions help the officials who do this, who take licences away from people, maybe make better decisions as to when they do this?

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: All I can say is that my role would be an impartial adjudicator of whatever appears before me. I have to deal with the facts and the parameters of the law that I have been given. As an administrative tribunal, you have to work within the parameters of your law.

My sense is that anything that clarifies things helps people along. Whatever the rules are, you have to either meet them or you don't meet them, and my role would be to impartially look at the facts before me and see if they meet the rules or don't meet the rules. How decisions of the appeal tribunal resonate into the other areas, I couldn't really say.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: And just as an aside, the reason I asked that question—he had medical experts, whoever he needed, to get this licence back and he still found a door that he couldn't get through.

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: I can't speak to the gentleman's particular case.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: No, but I just wondered if your judgments would maybe help legislation along or regulations along—

Mr. Mike Colle: It's not in the legislation.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Excuse me—whether your legal judgments would help with the process, is what I'm getting at. I understand what you're telling me—

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: I think in the sense of precedents, if facts come before you and they meet the test they need to meet and you rule in that favour—let's say, for instance, it was a party denying the gentleman his licence, but when he presented, he met the rules and met the test, obviously I would think people who get that decision would have to think, "Well, why did we not give this gentleman"—and maybe an independent assessment of the facts as rules, "Well, this is how it should have been looked at." But again—

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): You have about 90 seconds.

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: —I would be bound by the parameters of the role I'm given. I think within that there's always learnings in life.

Mr. Randy Pettapiece: Yes.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Thank you, Mr. Pettapiece. We're going to turn it over to Mr. Oosterhoff.

Mr. Sam Oosterhoff: I just have a real quick question about your involvement with the Consent and Capacity Board. How do you think that engagement will help you form your decisions or help inform your experiences on the tribunal? I'm doing some work with a family right now, a family from the GTA, that has concerns with the MOU between the ministry and the Consent and Capacity Board as it pertains to religious exemptions for end-of-life care and such. I'm just wondering what your experience was like. I haven't met a board member from the Consent and Capacity Board before. If you could explain a little bit about how that will inform your experience here.

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: Well, it's a provincial tribunal. It applies the Mental Health Act, among other acts. My role there had been as a member of panel, so it informed me because it fine-tuned my listening skills. I think when you're hearing people's concerns, it's not just hearing them. You have to listen to them and give empathy to the people that come before you. With the Consent and Capacity Board in particular, with the nature of the people that come before you, you have to have a lot of empathy for the people who come before the board.

I don't know if I'm answering your question—

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Thank you very much. We have now exhausted the time for questions.

We are now going to turn it over to Mr. Gates.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Good morning, sir. How are you?

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: Good morning, sir. How are you?

Mr. Wayne Gates: If I were any better, I'd be you, but not as good-looking.

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: I would beg to differ. You have a very nice Lanny McDonald moustache there.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Well, it's better than Tom Selleck, I guess.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Tom Selleck? There you go.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I get Tom Selleck. This is the first time anybody has ever said anything about my moustache looking like Lanny McDonald's, so I'll take that as a compliment, because he's a pretty nice guy.

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: I think so.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Yes, he is.

I'll ask you a few questions, a couple of things I wrote down. Can you describe what motivated you to seek this appointment? The second part is, were you approached by the Liberal government or did you apply for the position? Then I'll follow up on a couple of the things that the other party said.

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: As I mentioned in my brief introduction, public service is something that has always been central to me. I generally look up to see what appointments are available. This came to my notice; I put my application in.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I appreciate that. Did the Liberals approach you?

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: Nobody approached me.

Mr. Wayne Gates: My colleagues, my buddies next to me, said that you donated \$2,000 in 2014 or 2015 to the Liberals. That's accurate?

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: I won't contradict that I have donated. I didn't go back and research it—

Mr. Wayne Gates: But I also—sorry; I didn't mean to jump in. Go ahead.

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: I didn't go back and quantify it. If you have quantified it, I will go with your quantification.

Mr. Wayne Gates: You probably don't do your own income tax, then, because you would probably know what you donated; I'm just saying.

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: Well, in preparation for today, I didn't go back and review my income tax returns.

Mr. Wayne Gates: It's a normal question here. Don't feel that you're special in this one; it's asked a lot here.

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: No, no. You've asked the question; I've answered it.

Mr. Wayne Gates: The other part that I kind of liked is—you slipped it out there and the Conservatives didn't jump on it—that you also said that you donated to another party. What party was that?

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: The Conservatives.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Okay. I was just wondering.

There are three parties, but he mentioned two of them. That's all I want to get out there; okay?

Mr. Mike Colle: It's legal to do that in Ontario.

Mr. Wayne Gates: It is, but I just wanted to—because they had asked if you donated to the Liberals but they forgot to mention that you did donate to the PC Party, too.

There were a couple of things that I thought were interesting in your comments. One is your community service. The second thing is, I was really interested in the mock criminal process only because we just had one of those mock parliaments last week, with young people.

I went in and listened to the students. They divided into all three parties. They're very engaged. It's very educational. They enjoy themselves. This is quite interesting too, so I think that's very good, that the high school students are doing it.

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: It's an initiative of the local courthouse.

What's refreshing about it is that we've seen students who participate, who actually then graduate from law school and then come back as mentors. It's nice to see that giving back in the whole environment.

Mr. Wayne Gates: It exposes them to it; right? It gives them another option if they have some passion around it, and then they get to see how it all works. I think it's a great program. I didn't know about that, so I thought that was pretty cool.

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: Thank you.

Mr. Wayne Gates: The other thing is, I've got a question here on the medical—guys trying to go back to

work when they lose their licence. It was raised by my colleague. When you get on this, because you will, take a good look at that. It's not an isolated case; it happens all the time. It's happened in my riding a number of times. The individual can do everything right. He can go to a specialist. He can get all the documents. It still takes way too long for that individual to get his licence back. Sometimes in a union shop you might be okay; they can find you another job. Outside the union shop, sometimes guys lose their job because part of their job is driving. When you get on that, I would appreciate you—it has been raised by both parties that it's maybe something that you could take a look at when you get on and say, "How's that process working? How can we make it better? How can we do it quicker?" Because livelihoods are at stake there.

0920

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: Fair enough.

Mr. Wayne Gates: They're legitimately taken away. But when they're healthy again, with specialists and everything you have to do, and then they're waiting months and months later—the process has to get fixed. I just thought that I would raise that with you.

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: Thank you, sir.

Mr. Wayne Gates: The tribunal has been receiving applications for appeals on horse racing licences. I'm not sure if this is something that you plan to directly deal with, but there are a lot of issues currently with horse racing in the province of Ontario, including the track in my area, the Fort Erie Race Track. After slots were taken out of many rural tracks, those tracks had to regroup to remain viable. Are you aware of the volume of horse racing licence appeals and the scope of those appeals that the tribunal sees before them?

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: I'm not aware. I haven't been appointed to the board yet. I take your indication to heart and will keep an eye out for that. I'm not sure if those hearings will come before me. I'm not sure what I'll be hearing if I get on the board. But I'm glad that both you and the gentleman before you have identified concerns that you have. I think it's valid to do so and valid for members to think about.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I appreciate your answer, because horse racing is very, very important in the province of Ontario, and we are having lots of challenges around it. So I appreciate how you answered that question. It's very similar to the MTO thing. There are things that, when you come here, you want to highlight because they're very, very important, obviously, to everybody around the table here.

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: I fundamentally believe that life is about learning. You stop learning when you die. Other than that, you keep on learning every day. I think that these are things that we all have to take into account.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I appreciate that.

I understand that, as of April 1, 2016, the tribunal began accepting applications for the new Automobile Accident Benefits Service.

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: Correct.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I'm sure you're aware that auto insurance has been a huge issue in our province for quite some time—including the high rates that Ontario pays for auto insurance, which I believe are the highest in the country. How do you feel that the tribunal can help the consumer, now that they are accepting these applications?

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: Well, having presented my clients' cases before the predecessor of that service, I can tell you that you put together your clients' facts and you argue vehemently for your clients' benefit, and the tribunal makes decisions. I can see that that impacts the decision before the tribunal. I don't know how that flows into the expense of insurance rates or whether that impacts that. Usually, it's for statutory accident benefits: It's for income replacement or for caregiving benefits. That would be the focus of the application.

Now, I gather that, in your realm, those facts might lead to something else, but my understanding is that, as a tribunal member, I am limited to those facts and those circumstances.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): You have just under three minutes.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Thank you very much.

I guess a follow-up on that is that there have been a lot of changes that really benefited insurance companies in the province of Ontario. I'm not so sure that those changes have really helped the victims, and that should be our concern. I wanted to raise that with you, as well.

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: Well, having been an advocate and having represented clients in that realm, I can tell you that I fought for my clients' benefits.

Mr. Wayne Gates: I'm sure you have, but I'm just saying that a lot of the changes in the automotive insurance game were for the benefit of the insurance companies. In my opinion, I believe that a lot of those were not for the benefit of victims. Some of the changes, I think, were a mistake. But that's just because I was involved with it with a bad accident with my wife, so I understand how the process works a little bit.

I understand that you have a background in law, which you've already said a few times here. Can you describe how that background will assist you in dealing with subject matter and legal issues before the tribunal?

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: Having a background in law and the breadth of law that I practise gives you a core skill set in legal analysis, in assessing facts and in assessing applicable law, and marrying those two things to come to a decision. I think that the legal, analytical skills are definitely a prerequisite, in my mind, and for me, they have been beneficial. I intend to continue to apply those skill sets in this environment, as I did when I was a lawyer member of the Consent and Capacity Board of Ontario.

Mr. Wayne Gates: Are there any challenges that you feel are facing any of the review boards—because there's a number of them—you'll be sitting on? And if there are, what are they and how do you feel that you can help address them?

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: I haven't got to the board yet but I know, at least during the interview process, it was clear that there is a high volume of applications, particularly in the accident benefits realm, coming before the board. I think one of the challenges would be to process that in a timely manner so that people understand their conclusions on their applications. So I do understand that that's an issue for the board. Obviously, once I get in there it would be more visible to me as to what issues are there. I commit to applying my skill sets to try to resolve those.

Mr. Wayne Gates: You mentioned about your community services. What would they be, other than the politics stuff?

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: Well, the politics is actually a very minor part of my life. I have been the president of the Halton Multicultural Council. I sat on the allocations cabinet in United Way of Oakville. I was the president of Peel Law Association. I'm currently a benchner of the Law Society of Upper Canada—

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Thank you very much. That concludes our time for questioning from the third party.

We're now going to turn it over to Ms. Kiwala. You have seven minutes.

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: Thank you very much, Chair, and thank you very much for being here today, Mr. Sharda. I'm very impressed with your resumé. The one thing that I do just want to say for the record is that appointments are not selected by us. They're the decision of the executive chair after interviewing a number of candidates. I can see, based on the resumé that has been supplied to us, that you have a very wide breadth of experience in quite a number of different areas. You began to talk about them, but just to assure this committee that there is no—I personally don't have any qualms about the fact that you might be able to make assessments and decisions that are impartial.

Just to look at your resumé, some of the different areas that you didn't have to be involved in if you weren't as committed as you are—you've been involved as a member of the mental health committee at the Ontario Court of Justice. I find it interesting that we've all zeroed in on and are interested in the mock trial. I think that's a testament to what we feel as a committee is important. Obviously, nurturing and mentoring youth is important to society. You've been a mentor at the Law Society of Upper Canada; you didn't have to do that; president of the Canadian Association of South Asian Lawyers; OBA council member. You've been involved as a board member at the Advocacy Centre for the Elderly. You've been involved with the Indo-Canada Chamber of Commerce. You were the co-chair of Carousel of Nations Multicultural Festival, and also, as mentioned, you were involved in the Halton Multicultural Council, as president.

I'm going to go back to some of the statements that you made at the beginning of your comments this morning about the fact that you are very aligned with

public service. I believe it's something that's obviously important to you—by the way that you have spent your professional and personal life—and I want to thank you for your public service.

Your decisions going forward, if you get this appointment, will involve seven different ministries. There will be quite a wide breadth of decisions that you would be required to make rulings on. I'm wondering if you've given some consideration at this point to what you feel would be the most challenging, in this day, out of those ministries, and how will you deal with that?

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: My understanding is that my involvement with the tribunal will be predominantly with accident benefits—so, as I said, my understanding is a high volume of cases. The problem with FSCO was that there was a big time lag in the cases being resolved. I know that the tribunal is dedicated to dealing with these applications in a proactive and fast manner. I mentioned in my intro about settlement work that I do as a deputy judge at settlement conferences. I know that's a portion of what the activities will be to try and get early resolution to matters. So I have focused on that aspect of it. I do understand that there are other areas of the licensing tribunal, but it wasn't my understanding that I would be predominantly in that area. My understanding is that I'm predominantly for the accident benefits area.

0930

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: Okay, very good. How much time do we have left?

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): We have two and a half minutes.

Ms. Sophie Kiwala: Two and a half minutes. Are there things that you feel that we haven't had an opportunity to talk about yet that you would like to bring forward to the committee? Anything about your past experience that hasn't been addressed yet that you feel will end up in positive outcomes for this position?

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: I think as a person committed to public service—you've highlighted that. The brief summary you get may not highlight all of my community work, and I didn't want to prolong my intro to do that. My viewpoint is that it's public service. The role has parameters, and you have to act within the parameters.

I enjoyed my time at the Consent and Capacity Board. I was known to be a person who—I'll give you an example. We had a hearing up in Fort Frances. It actually shouldn't have been a Consent and Capacity Board hearing, but nobody knew what to do, so they thought, "Oh, let's put that to the Consent and Capacity Board." Unfortunately, it was a young lady who had been in a wheelchair all her life and now she was changing age. Because she was getting to the age of majority, the supports that were available for her as a child were no longer to be available as an adult. So rather than run the hearing, I took a break and I canvassed all of the parties—and there were more than normal. Usually it's a doctor and a patient, but there were a lot of community

organizations and whatnot there. So we managed to work out a plan and we managed to work out a timeline.

That was available to me there. That may not be available to me here, but that's the type of work I do. When I see there's an opportunity to resolve things, I think it needs to be taken.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Any further questions? Mr. Colle.

Mr. Mike Colle: Yes, I just want to thank you for offering yourself to this job in the public service. I see that you came up through the ranks. You were a clerk in, I guess, wholesale—you started from the bottom on the floor.

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: Family business.

Mr. Mike Colle: Then you went to law school. You were a soccer coach. You were a town councillor in Oakville.

Listen, we need more people like you to just not think of the bottom line and making money—which is okay—but thank you for offering yourself. I think you'll make a great contribution to the board. You've obviously got this track record, and we certainly appreciate you coming forward. It's not easy to come forward these days, but at least you are offering yourself. And, as I said, you came up from the grassroots here, working, so—

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Thank you very much, Mr. Colle. That concludes the time for questioning.

You may step down, Mr. Sharda. Thank you very much.

Mr. Rajneesh Sharda: Thank you.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): We are now going to consider the concurrence for Mr. Rajneesh Sharda, nominated as member, Licence Appeal Tribunal (Safety, Licensing Appeals and Standards Tribunals Ontario). Would someone please move the concurrence? Mr. Qaadri.

Mr. Shafiq Qaadri: I move concurrence in the intended appointment of Rajneesh Sharda, nominated as member, Licence Appeal Tribunal (Safety, Licensing Appeals and Standards Tribunals Ontario).

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Any discussion? All in favour? Opposed? The motion is carried. Congratulations, Mr. Rajneesh Sharda.

We have a question. Mr. Gates?

Mr. Wayne Gates: I'd just like to get on the record that yesterday I was surprised at the announcement of the resignation of Dr. Hoskins. I just wanted to say, on behalf of myself, he always was a class individual, who I had a lot of dealings with. He always worked with me. I just want to say thank you for his service, but equally important, I wish him the best in his future endeavours.

The Chair (Mrs. Cristina Martins): Thank you very much, Mr. Gates.

Any further discussion? Seeing none, we are adjourned.

The committee adjourned at 0935.

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